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SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: GREEK FOREIGN MINISTER REJECTS LINK BETWEEN
REFERENDA AND TURKEY'S EU ACCESSION

REF: STATE 99740

1. (SBU) In advance of Greek FM Molyviatis' June 2 press conference with the Foreign Press Association in Athens, Ambassador drew on refel points to suggest to Molyviatis, chief of staff Constantinos Rallis that the FM use the occasion to emphasize that the French referendum outcome should have no impact on the launch of the Turkey-EU accession negotiations process. Rallis said Molyviatis would make the case that the two issues -- French referendum and Turkish process -- were not connected and shouldn't be. Rallis added that FM Molyviatis conducted a closed door briefing of the all-party foreign policy consultative council including PASOK and Synapismos (but not KKE) June 1 on Turkey-Greece and other issues. All parties, he said, reaffirmed their strong support for a start to EU accession talks on October 3 as planned.

2. (U) In the press event June 2, Molyviatis did use the occasion to express Greece's continuing support for Turkey/EU despite the outcome of the French and Dutch referenda. Excerpts from the transcript follow:

..."I think that obviously the results from France and from the Netherlands, which were both negative, are a very important event, indeed, which we have to take very seriously; all of us have to do this. And we should all try to study and properly interpret the messages which are being sent to us by the peoples who voted in these two referenda. These are messages to their own countries, but also in a wider sense to the whole of Europe....I believe that enlargement must continue, just as it has been envisaged to date. You were talking about two countries which have already signed their accession treaties, Romania and Bulgaria, and obviously our position here is that we must continue in the direction of complete accession of these two countries, and we here in Greece are obviously very actively supporting Bulgaria and Romania in this procedure of accession."

"But obviously you were also referring to Turkey, I assume, with your question. Now, I believe, or actually it's a fact, that the movement of Turkey in the direction of Europe was decided on by the European Council of the 17th of December. In the conclusions of this European Council, we have a detailed description and a clear description of the conditions, criteria and prerequisites that have to be fulfilled by Turkey in its European development, in order for it to become a member of the European Union. And it is also said in these conclusions that the accession negotiations for Turkey shall begin on the 3rd of October. Nobody has asked for an amendment or an overturning of these decisions."

"Thus our position is very clearly that Turkey must continue its development in the direction of Europe, just as this is described in the conditions and criteria stipulated in the decision of the 17th of December of the European Council. Now, as to Greece's general position vis-a-vis Turkey and its development in the direction of Europe, obviously Greece's positions have no influence whatsoever on the referendum results in France and the Netherlands."

RIES